



PUBLIC NOTICE

Received & Inspected

NOV 21 2012

FCC Mail Room

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202
/ 418-0500
Internet:
<http://www.fcc.gov>

DA 12-1644

Released: October 15, 2012

**ADDITIONAL COMMENT SOUGHT ON
STRUCTURE AND PRACTICES OF THE VIDEO RELAY SERVICE (VRS) PROGRAM AND
ON PROPOSED VRS COMPENSATION RATES**

CG Docket No. 03-123

CG Docket No. 10-51

Comments: November 14, 2012

Reply Comments: November 29, 2012

In June 2010, the Commission began a comprehensive review of the rates, structure, and practices of the video relay services (VRS) program.¹ The Commission's goal in beginning that review, and ever since then, has been to reform the VRS program, which for many years had been beset by waste, fraud, and abuse² and by compensation rates that had become inflated well above actual cost.³ Since that time, the Commission has acted to improve the program so that it can continue to provide a valuable service to deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers as efficiently as possible.⁴

¹ *Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program*, CG Docket No. 10-51, Notice of Inquiry, 25 FCC Rcd 8597, ¶ 1 (2010) (*2010 VRS NOI*).

² See, e.g., Twenty-six Charged in Nationwide Scheme to Defraud the FCC's Video Relay Service Program, United States Department of Justice (DOJ) (Nov. 19, 2009) at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2009/November/09-crm-1258.html>; see also Two Former Executives of Indicted Relay Services Company Plead Guilty to Defrauding FCC Program, DOJ (Jan. 13, 2010) at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/January/10-crm-031.html>; Two Former Executives of Video Relay Services Company Plead Guilty to Defrauding FCC Program, DOJ (Feb. 18, 2010) at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/February/10-crm-157.html>; Four Former Owners and Employees of Three Video Relay Service Companies Plead Guilty to Defrauding FCC Program, DOJ (March 5, 2010) at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/March/10-crm-229.html>; Three Former Owners and Employees of Two Video Relay Service Companies Plead Guilty to Defrauding FCC Program, DOJ (March 9, 2010) at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/March/10-crm-237.html>.

³ See *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, Order, 25 FCC Rcd 8689, 8694, ¶ 9 (2010), *aff'd Sorenson Communications, Inc. v. FCC*, 659 F.3d 1035 (2011) (*2010 TRS Rate Order*) (finding that in each of the years 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009, VRS compensation rates were more than \$2.00 per minute higher than actual costs).

⁴ One of the Commission's first actions in this regard, through the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB, or the Bureau) on delegated authority, was to reject a VRS provider's request for a ruling that multi-party



Take Action Now

The FCC is proposing harmful changes to VRS. Become informed and let the FCC know your concerns by [clicking here](#).

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Share your concerns with the FCC. If you rely on VRS to conduct business, stay in touch with family and friends, for access to emergency 911 service, or for any other purpose, it is important that you tell the FCC and your representatives in Congress what you think about the proposed changes.

Submit your comment to the FCC and your Congressional Representative

The FCC is taking comments from the public on the proposed changes to VRS. All comments should be submitted to the FCC by Nov. 29, 2012. You can submit a comment through this website or you can send a letter yourself directly to the FCC.

Choose Your Message:



I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and use VRS for business



I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and use VRS to stay in touch with family and friends



I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and rely on VRS for emergency 911 service



I am hearing, but know how important VRS is for those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing



I am a sign language interpreter that supports the VRS service.



I will send my own letter directly to the FCC

Print



Tie Lynn Brandow

Sign



Sie Lynn Brandow



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Choose Your Message:

- ☒ I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and use VRS for business
- ☒ I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and use VRS to stay in touch with family and friends
- ☒ I am deaf or hard-of-hearing and rely on VRS for emergency 911 service
- ☒ I am hearing, but know how important VRS is for those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing
- ☒ I am a sign language interpreter that supports the VRS service.
- ☒ I will send my own letter directly to the FCC

print → Timothy BRANDON

Sign \rightarrow

Lucy H. Brandon

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November 14, 2012

FCC Mail Room

Dear FCC

As a deaf constituent living in your district, I am writing to make you aware of the FCC's Public Notice (CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51) on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not. I hope that you will help prevent these changes from taking place.

**Kenny Stephens
1165 Colony Dr. Apt 317
Westerville, OH 43081
614-423-6662**

Kenny Stephens

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenny Stephens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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FCC Mail Room

November 14, 2012

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Jerry Whitlock
1165 Colony Dr. Apt 211
Westerville, OH 43081
614-423-6632

Jerry Whitlock

 11-14-12

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FCC Mail Room

November 16, 2012

Dear FCC

As a deaf constituent living in your district, I am writing to make you aware of the FCC's Public Notice (CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51) on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

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The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not. I hope that you will help prevent these changes from taking place.

Nathan Miller
1165 Colony Dr. Apt 219
Westerville, OH 43081
614-423-6638

Nathan Miller



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November 16,

2012

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10.51

FCC Mail Room

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned about these proposals and how they will affect my family's safety.

VRS is a lifeline. It allows me to conduct business, connect with my family and friends and do many other things over the phone that many hearing people take for granted. Most important, though, VRS is how I access my local emergency 911 service. In an emergency I know that when I place a 911 call it will be answered immediately. My location will be known. And, specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be there to make sure my local emergency responders know exactly what help I need. You can't imagine how frightening it is to think that I might not be able to get help for me or my family because of long hold times, poorly trained interpreters, or bad equipment.

Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce the service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government is proposing dramatic cuts to their compensation? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

**Nathan Miller
1165 Colony Dr #219
Westerville, OH 43081
614-423-6638**

Nathan Miller

Nathan Miller

Hello to FCC & government,

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I apology to want typing letters that I found out what happened about FCC changes rules of Sorenson VRS company because FCC have economy problem or something problem but it still must keep Sorenson VRS for deaf people and we need VRS but remember that VRS today is a shining example of what Congress intended when it passed the Americans with Disabilities Act 22 years ago. And this is Americans with Disabilities Act please. I very sorry!

And I must inform you that we happy with Sorenson VRS of video phone that many deaf can't hear on regular phone that why it new technology to use video phone and video phone have interpreter too and emergency 911 that use too in video phone.

We happy that Sorenson VRS company gave deaf people got free because that Sorenson company that help deaf can communicate thru video phone that deaf people who can't hear on regular phone and I just surprised that Sorenson company gave me free of video phone that I very happy because I still can't afford expensive because I got free. Plus deaf people were surprised that got free from Sorenson VRS of video phone that why. And we don't want paying expensive of higher rate \$2.00 per minutes to Sorenson VRS video phone & equipment. Deaf people some can't afford paying expensive higher rate per minutes. Warning that higher rate per minutes is made us got suffer to paying expensive or we don't have a lot money.

We still paying every months for high speed internet & the internet is not free but video phone required must have internet too but we all paying internet on computer.

I knew you that maybe you had got economy problem but I still very sorry that deaf people are disability that must have technology of video phone all times. Deaf have some needs that why use video phone of new technology or support technology that why. We all want keep Sorenson VRS.

My parent told me that can't afford expensive to paying to use Sorenson VRS that my parent will not allowing me to use Sorenson VRS video phone but I did told my parent that Sorenson VRS company told me that is free then my parent said ok to allowing me to have Sorenson VRS video phone that my parent said if it is free that not need worrying to paying. Example: if FCC or government force us to paying Sorenson VRS video phone then my parent will say no to me to use video phone that if is not free. I very apology!

Sorenson VRS are NOT waste, fraud, and abuse, Thank you. Please STOP changes. Sorenson VRS is wonderful and good! I will get become worrying if FCC proposed changes to current VRS Program.

Please don't discrimination or don't harm or don't to be cruel to all deaf people, please.

Please you & government/FCC try to understand about deaf people.

Please don't hurt or don't hate to deaf people please, Thank you!

Have a wonderful day and thank you for try understanding us about deaf!

Thank you, Andrea Hill

Sincerely,

Andrea Hill

Andrea Hill

Andrea Hill
601 Coolidge Ave
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Phone: 630-890-8152

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FCC Mail Room

Mrs. Cynther A. Lansberry

1125 Laird St.

Akron, Ohio 44305-3227

VRS: (234) 525-6104

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FCC Mail Room

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

Save My VRS

Federal Communication Commission

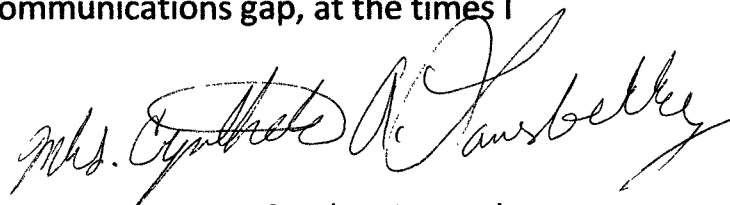
445 12th ST., SW,

Room TW-A325

Washington, DC 20554

Re; Pursuant to Sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commissioner's Rules, 47 C.F.R
Reference CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

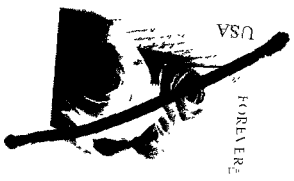
The FCC is to take away needed Functions of, Video Relay Service Phone? They already took the direct number away; this made it so I can't; call Direct Video Phone to Video Phone: Now Relay Service; is always required! I can't make Private calls. These changes will endanger my safety and that of my husband; Gene; he's going blind. He can't use hand signs as he can't see their hands, I am Profound Deaf; some medications take my voice for a time, once for 1 & 1/2 Years. If you make these proposed cuts, we won't be safe in our home. If I need an Ambulance or Police, My husband may not be able to get Help for me & I may not be able to get help for him; we already have a severe communications gap, at the times I can't talk to each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mrs. Cynther A. Lansberry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cynther" being particularly prominent.

Mrs. Cynther A. Lansberry

Guthrie A. Danenberg
25 Laird Street
Boston, MA 02108 443-3227

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445 12th St, SW,
Washington, DC 20554
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FCC Mail Room 11/15/12

Dearest!

I want support my
VRS com

I have many friends &
Family

I am deaf

I want Keep SM TOUCH

Thank you very
much

Lillian Overton

Mrs. Lillian Overton

420 N. Madison St. Apt. A

Siloam Spring, Ark. -

72761

Vip - 918-791-3111

CG Docket No. 03-1234 10-51

STOP FCC changing VRS

save my VP

Alice

VP 484 262 0411

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Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

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CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

FCC Mail Room

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned that the changes being considered by the FCC will destroy a program that is vitally important to people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name William Murphy

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1365 Briarcliff rd #250, Reynoldsburg OH
43068

Telephone Number 614 452 9598

ATTENTION:

WE WANT TO KEEP VRS SERVICE. DONT DO STOP US NO WAY.

I AM DEAF TO USE VRS TO STAY WITH TOUCH WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

I AM DEAF AND RELY ON VRS FOR EMERAGENCY 911 SERIVCE.

I'M SUPPORT SIGN LANGUEG INTERPRETER THE VRS SERVICE.

PLEASE DONT STOP OUR DEAF COMMUINTY WE CAN RUN WITH THE VRS SERVICE.

WE'RE HAPPY WITH THE VRS SERVICE WONDERFUL

THANKS YOU

Darlene Zimmer

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NOV 21 2012

FCC Mail Room

11/16/2012

19521 Stamford Drive
Livonia, MI 48152
November 15, 2012

Federal Communication Commission
445 12 Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

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FCC Mail Room

Dear Julius Genachowski

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am hearing, but know how important VRS is for those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

I am writing in response to the FCC's request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned that the changes being considered will destroy a program that is vitally important to people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard of hearing to use the "phone" to communicate just like people who can hear. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted - make a doctor's appointment or call a child's school. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government mandated software that is used on off the shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, or tablets. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

William and Marianne Knight

US Senator

Us Representative

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As a constituent living in your district, I am writing in response to the FCC's request for comments (CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 1051) on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

Please help protect the rights of deaf Americans by preventing these proposed changes

Last

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf. Please help protect the rights of deaf Americans by preventing these proposed changes.

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FCC Mail Room

November 16, 2012

Re: CG Docket No. 03-123 and 10-51

I am a deaf person who needs VRS. I am the caregiver of my elderly mother and need to be able to communicate with her doctors, the pharmacy, etc. I also need to be able to contact 911. My mother has memory loss, confusion and has trouble hearing on the phone.

Please keep this service for deaf people. It is so important.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne E. Ouellette".

Jeanne E. Ouellette
PO Box 269
Raymond, NH 03077
Video Phone 603-244-3801

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